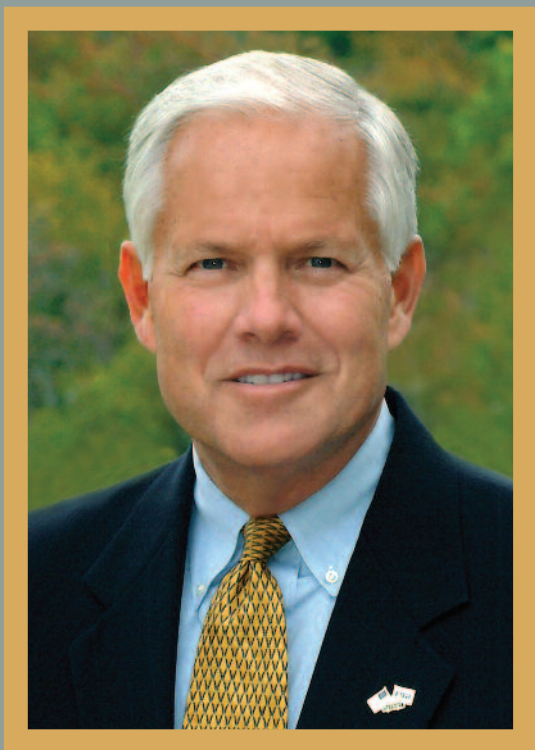




MAYOR  
DONALD L. PLUSQUELLIC'S  
**22nd**  
STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS  
February 24, 2009



THE MUNICIPAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2008



## MAYOR DONALD L. PLUSQUELLIC

As 2008 drew to a close, it became clear that Mayor Don Plusquellic would once again be playing a role on the national stage. This time, at the request of then President-Elect Barack Obama, he was being called upon to join a handful of mayors from around the nation to work on infrastructure funding to repair cities and create jobs. That work continues today as Mayor Plusquellic devotes time to securing jobs and funding for Akron.

Given today's economy, competition with other cities, states, regions and countries for jobs, being a mayor has never been more challenging or more rewarding.

"Akron is faring better than most any other city in the Midwest right now, and I feel good about that," Mayor Plusquellic has said. "But, the toughest work may just be starting as we head into the teeth of a very difficult national economic situation."

The work our Mayor began in 2007, continued into last year as he was able to solidify thousands of jobs and five important companies' positions in our community. He invested much time and energy in negotiations with Bridgestone-Firestone, the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, Sterling Jewelers, Inc., FirstEnergy Corp. and InfoCision Management Corporation. The work paid off with each committing that its corporate headquarters would remain in Akron.

Akron's Biomedical Corridor is taking shape now, holding tremendous promise not only for the future of Akron's work force, but for the way the world looks at the city. The response has been tremendous on the part of businesses in a variety of related fields. Having an area in the central city with a concentration in this field makes Akron fertile ground for the future of biomedical-related businesses and an even stronger educational presence in the field.

Our city's new Community Learning Centers continue to emerge throughout our neighborhoods with six new schools opening last year, six more to open this year including Akron's new Science, Technology, Engineering & Math at the National Inventor's Hall of Fame; each complete with brand new, popular after-school programs and community-centered activities

Plusquellic continues his service as vice president of Mayors for Peace, an international organization, and his work with the United States Conference of Mayors. Plusquellic is a past president of the 500-member organization and recipient of the honor, Municipal Leader of the Year.

Akron's longest-serving Mayor this year begins the second year of his sixth term and his 23rd in office. First sworn in as Akron's 59th mayor in 1987, he had served on Akron City Council for 13 years, including as its president from 1984-1987. Plusquellic has now devoted 35 years to public service.

Mayor Plusquellic has two children and four grandchildren Anna, Abigail, Alison and Adam.



## NEIGHBORHOODS

- Akron utilized more than \$38 million in residential development funds for Cascade Village South, Edgewood Homes, Spicer Village, and the Collinson Apartments to increase total neighborhood investments for city.
- Razed 468 dilapidated residential and commercial structures, and continued the housing program that has now constructed 375 affordable homes in Akron. High school students in the Education in Action program built its 14th new home.
- Assisted 102 low-income, elderly or disabled homeowners with grants for emergency home repairs, rehabilitated and reduced lead hazards in more than 100 homes, and with First Energy provided electrical home repair to 37 low income households.
- Provided grants for home security, accessibility and house painting services to 27 low- income residents.
- Established Heritage Homes Program to preserve the historic character of houses by providing low-interest loans to owners of older homes.
- The Neighborhood Partnership Program, funded with \$100,000 in City funds and matched by the Akron Community Foundation, partnered with 52 community groups on neighborhood cleanup, beautification, special events, and tutoring/mentoring projects.
- Assisted 17 businesses with property improvements in Temple Square and Kenmore Boulevard Neighborhood business districts. Collaborated in securing \$380,000 in private investments for Neighborhood Business Districts.



*New Public Housing  
at AMHA's  
Edgewood Homes.*



## PUBLIC SERVICE

- Consolidated Building Inspection services with Summit County to reduce costs, relocating the department with the County building department on East Tallmadge Avenue.
- Consolidated printing and document production services with Summit County to reduce costs.
- Began construction on North Street, from Howard to Furnace, which with new homes built by AMHA revitalizes this area. The intersection of North and Furnace was made safer.
- Davenport Park completed design for renovation of the restrooms, sidewalk reconstruction and the construction of a pavilion.
- Engineering Services operated 23,000 street and expressway lights and arranged for new street lighting at AMHA's Edgewood and Spring streets.

### **Highway Maintenance**

- Performed 11,471 customer service work requests
- Repaired over 45,000 potholes
- Resurfaced 50 miles of roadways, an increase of approximately 85%, including 14 miles of expressways
- Reduced cost by 50% allowing Akron to expand the number of streets that can be resurfaced annually
- Studied the feasibility of Hot-In-Place asphalt resurfacing, a green initiative that will save natural resources by reducing our need for virgin asphalt materials on resurfacing projects, and will be installed by City work force
- Prepared for start of environmentally friendly process for '09 street repair work. Will begin recycling existing asphalt thus saving aggregate, sand, liquid asphalt, the energy to operate an asphalt plant, the pavement grinder, and numerous trucks that haul the asphalt grindings and virgin asphalt materials
- Reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 55%

## **Parks Maintenance**

- Responded to 6,772 customer service requests
- Spent September and October picking up storm debris city-wide
- Trimmed nearly 12,000 trees for safety and beautification
- Rebuilt 14 baseball/softball fields, along with the installation of a new grass infield at Summit Lake baseball field. Kenmore High School will be playing on a new grass infield at Prentiss Park, installed by Parks Maintenance



*Public Works of Art Enliven the City*

## **Sanitation Services**

- Received record-setting 24,196 request calls including 12,768 calls from customers for the Special Bulk Pickup request through the 3-1-1 call center
- Enacted a Recycle Pilot Program for City special events: Hamburger Festival; Soap Box Derby; Akron Marathon; Akron Arts Expo etc.
- Provided curbservice for new homeowners at the Edgewood Village Homes
- Started a program to provide curbservice/drive approach snow removal service for 428+ medical exemption customers
- Saved \$360,000 in Workers' Compensation costs with implementation of new curbservice collection containers and trucks

## **Street Cleaning**

- Swept 32,247 miles of streets were swept
- Removed 5,391 tons of dirt and debris from City streets and City rights-of-way
- Completed two rounds of leaf removal, picking up 43,488 cubic yards
- Recycled all leaves by blending them with wood mulch or topsoil
- Completed 3,245 customer service requests, including 1,908 for carcass removal from City rights-of-way

## **Safe Streets**

- Striped 300 miles of City streets and 27 miles of expressways using 7,300 gallons of traffic paint
- Manufactured and installed 4100 signs
- Activated three more video-monitored, computer-controlled signal systems along Perkins and North Howard streets and Tallmadge Avenue
- Continued the zebra striping program for elementary school crosswalks to increase visibility and safety. Striped 70 crosswalks at 15 elementary schools
- Initiated a citywide bicycle plan for rider and motorist safety

## **Answering the Call**

- Logged 192,079 calls at the 3-1-1 Call Center from citizens seeking information and municipal services
- Processed 72,758 requests for a wide range of municipal services in the Customer Service Request System (CSR)
- For the Mayor's Neighborhood Nuisance Patrol Program, logged 8900 complaints of high grass and weeds between April and November; improved 5000 neglected properties; inspected more than 400 reported zoning violations, and responded to more than 5500 animal complaints

## **Recreation**

- Hosted for the first time the Ohio High School Athletic Association annual state championships in girls' softball at Firestone Stadium attracting nearly 10,000 fans from across Ohio
- Hosted the third annual King James Shooting Stars Classic basketball tournament with nearly 600 teams from across America playing more than 1,800 games
- Programmed 1,022 events for Akron's newest Community Learning Centers
- Hosted 20% more people than in 2007 for all community events citywide including summer concerts, Taste of Akron, Arts Expo and the Welcome Santa Holiday Parade



*Girls Celebrate at State Championship Tournament at Firestone Stadium.*

## COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

- Opened: six new Community Learning Centers with Mason, Jennings, Betty Jane, Robinson, Forest Hill and Sam Salem.
- Began work on six new CLC's - Ritzman, Leggett, Barber, Rimer, Findley CLC and the STEM learning center at the National Inventors Hall of Fame, for Science Tech Engineering and Math.
- Received grants for the STEM CLC of more than \$3 million from State of Ohio, federal government, OMNOVA, Exxon, Goodyear and GAR Foundation.
- The nationally recognized after-school programs funded and operated by the City of Akron include 11 schools- Barrett, Glover, Harris, Helen Arnold, Lawndale, Leggett, Lincoln, Mason, Rankin, Robinson, Schumacher. After-school students attending regularly demonstrate higher test scores and show greatest improvement in reading and math.



*New Mason Community Learning Center*

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- Launched the PeaceMakers program sponsored by Goodyear - a youth, anti crime program for high school students. In an eight week orientation, students learn how government and community organizations work. The goal is to involve young people in community activities. They meet monthly to discuss community issues that affect young people. Students interacted with police and saw firsthand the workings of juvenile court and learned about their rights as citizens. They conducted a Red Ribbon Week project in all Akron high schools signing up more than 2,500 young people pledging to do no drugs and be involved in no violence.
- Six PeaceMakers classes graduated with 80 students who have dedicated themselves to making Akron a stronger and safer community.



*PeaceMakers Carry Message Against Violence*

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### **Akron Fire Department and EMS**

- Responded to 32,941 EMS-related calls and 7,500 calls for service requiring a fire response
- Hired 38 new firefighter/medics in September 2008. Five were former participants in the ongoing City of Akron-funded "EMS Scholarship" program
- Placed in service a bariatric transport ambulance with specialized equipment to safely handle large patients



*The 2008 Class of Akron's Newest Fire EMS Recruits*

### **Akron Police Department**

- Made a record number of arrests in partnership with the U.S. Marshal's Office
- Initiated an officer recruiting campaign. More than 1,200 signed up to take the test during the five week campaign
- Removed 250 junk vehicles from private property
- Assisted U.S. Secret Service in presidential candidate visits
- Graduated 14 recruits from Training Academy
- Built on paperless system to allow officers more time on the streets
- Made arrests in large-scale sweeps and hot spot details, some in partnership with federal and state authorities
- Worked with city prosecutor to toughen legislation with regulation of local scrap dealers involved in theft of catalytic converters from vehicles



- Gun and Violence Reduction Task Force made 26 neighborhood sweeps making more than 1000 arrests and removing guns and drugs from Akron streets
- Officers made nearly 700 public appearances throughout the city, recognized 70 children in the Do The Right Thing program, participated in the Third Grade Safety Belt Program to educate students on the importance of seat belt usage, bicycle and pedestrian safety, and donated more than 250 bicycle helmets to area children along with Children's Hospital's Safe Kids Coalition

#### *Traffic safety:*

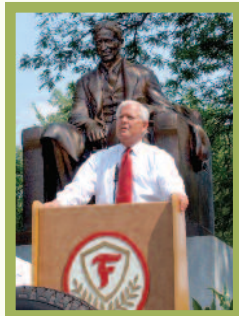
- Calls for Service . . . . . 13,649
- Accident Reports . . . . . 3,140
- Moving Violations . . . . . 1,208
- Number of DUI Arrests. . . . . 163
- One million people attended special community events safeguarded by the APD

## PUBLIC HEALTH

- Received a three-year, \$3 million dollar grant from HUD to address lead risks found in some Akron homes.
- Developed a new set of HIV prevention activities for 2009 as part of the Summit/Portage HIV Prevention Program, led by the Akron Health Department.
- Established the Office on Minority Health to support community programs that address health disparities experienced by Akron's minority populations.
- Served a growing number of persons as part of the County Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

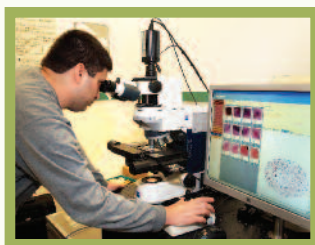
## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION

- **Bridgestone Firestone Technical Center** – In July, Bridgestone announced the company will build its new 246,500 square foot technical center at the corner of South Main Street and Firestone Boulevard with a new 400-space parking deck to be constructed on city land near Firestone Stadium with a skywalk over South Main Street. The project will result in retention of 1,000 jobs and an approximate \$100 million investment, including \$10 million by the City for the Firestone Park Redevelopment Plan and South Main-Wilbeth Urban Renewal Area Plan.
- **Goodyear Akron Riverwalk** – Goodyear's plans to keep its global and North American headquarters and 2,900 jobs in Akron encompasses over 500 acres in east Akron. The City of Akron will provide approximately \$100 million towards the \$900 million redevelopment cost. In 2008, the City was able to complete the acquisition of residential housing in the redevelopment area at a total of \$2.5 million and designed and bid a major sewer relocation in the project area. The design of Martha Avenue was completed in 2008 and will be constructed in 2009.
- **First Energy** – Construction of 208,000 square foot, \$33 million LEED Certified office building was completed in 2008. Approximately 200 information technology employees moved into the building in late August and another 500 FirstEnergy and FirstEnergy Solutions employees are expected to move in during the first quarter of 2009.
- **Akron Biomedical Corridor** – The Mayor has appointed committees from the hospitals and the universities, along with companies related to the biomedical industry to develop a vision, mission, goals and objectives. The city and its partners are striving to establish a public/private joint venture to capitalize on Akron's strengths in polymers, bio- materials, and excellence in clinical orthopedics to attract nationally prominent talent.
- **The Akron Global Business Accelerator** – experienced its best year ever as the Technology Incubator, completed two years ago is 85% filled, has graduated an advanced energy tenant to larger space and has now begun finishing its last 37,000 square feet. It garnered national and international attention as "Innovation Incubator of The Year" among 7,000 business incubators worldwide
- Accelerator companies raised \$16.4 million in investment capital and doubled the number of tenant companies and number of employees. There are now 43 tenant companies employing 250. Engineers, scientists and senior management employees commercialize world class technologies into world class companies



*Mayor Plusquellic in Harvey Firestone's Shadow for Bridgestone Firestone Announcement in July*

- The Accelerator's InSet Systems was named by Popular Science Magazine as a Top Ten Invention and featured in INC. Magazine. Currently, five clean technology companies reside in the Accelerator; with more to come
- AMTEC, an analytical instruments firm from Akron's sister city Chemnitz, Germany opened a sales office in Accelerator
- Collaborated with the Northeastern Ohio Consortium for Wound Healing Research & Education to co-sponsor Ohio's first ever Wound Care conference. Wound Care is a \$7 billion market
- At Ascot Industrial Park, JZM Properties LLC (**Frontline**) entered into a lease on 2.2 acres for the construction of a 15,000 square foot commercial building and the creation of 20 jobs
- At Ghent Road Office Park, Sterling Jewelers, Inc. working with the City, revised plans for the improvements to the retention pond to be approved by the Army Corps of Engineers
- At North Turkeyfoot Industrial Park, Hickory Harvest purchased a 6.2-acre site for the construction of a 35,000 square foot facility for packaged trail mixes, dried fruits and snack mixes. The company anticipates the building will be fully occupied by mid-April. Hickory Harvest will retain or create 30 jobs
- The City acquired 19-acres of land to create room for expansion for Gardner Pie Company and SJI



*High-Tech companies are launched at Global Business Accelerator*

- **Highland Square** - The City, Albrecht Inc., Akron Summit-County Public Library and FirstMerit Bank have made \$6 million in improvements to date at Highland Square including a new branch library, new retail space and public parking. The City continues to identify grocery operators and to discuss incentives to locate a food store in the project. Additional public parking on the south side of West Market Street will support the new commercial activity.
- **Rolling Acres/Romig Road** - City Council approved rezoning of retail land along the Romig Road corridor to permit office and light industrial development within the area, aimed at reusing or redeveloping vacant retail properties. Many of the former big box retail buildings have been adapted to new uses.
- **Spicer Village** - ASW Services constructed the first phase of 25 condos. Public improvements, including reconstruction of Brown and Power streets and construction of the new Kirt Street and new pedestrian way, were completed in 2008. A proposed 9,000 square foot expansion of Don Drumm Studios is to begin spring 2009.
- **A Schulman** - The company is redeveloping its existing 164,000 sq ft facility at 790 East Tallmadge Avenue as a new polybatch plant. The City of Akron provided a grant of \$60,000, and the company will employ 20 full time employees at the plant and add 60 jobs over the next four years.
- **GMP Friction Products** - Akron provided training grant assistance to this 80-year old company that produces sintered metallic friction materials. The company is growing and looking to expand the headquarters location or find additional space in Akron. It employs 60 persons and continues to hire.
- **Mobility Works** - The city approved a \$45,000 forgivable loan to assist with improvements to the Moe Drive facility. The company customizes passenger vehicles for handicap use and accessibility.
- **Mayor's Small Business Center** - Created in 2008, small businesses can receive assistance on such matters as accessing capital, business plan assistance, or how to improve or expand the real estate they presently occupy. The Small Business Development Center located in the Akron Global Business Accelerator, was created by the City and its partners to provide consulting and training classes to persons who are considering starting a business, need assistance in managing a growing business, or want to develop a new strategy to reenergize their existing business. Served 166 business clients.
- **Small Business Assistance Special Assessment Program** - Council passed legislation in September authorizing the Mayor to establish this program to assist eligible businesses in areas of construction of public improvements. Assistance loans would be repaid as a special assessment through semi-annual property tax billings.
- **Joint Marketing with Greater Akron Chamber** - Continued marketing efforts in Germany with expanded efforts in Israel, China, and participated with partners in promoting Greater Akron Area's polymer technologies and resources available to the worldwide tire industry through the ITEC show at

the Knight Center. Akron exhibited again at the 2008 BioMed Israel show. Akron representatives met companies interested in establishing a base in the US. Akron continued its strong involvement with Targetech

## DOWNTOWN

- The City completed the Cascade Locks Towpath Trail Bikeway linking downtown to all destinations north with the installation of bike and pedestrian bridge over Route 59. Construction was started on the Kenmore Towpath and Summit Lake Towpath Trail including the floating section on Summit Lake. Construction is scheduled for 2009 on the Waterloo Road Towpath Trail. The historic Richard Howe House was moved to house the new headquarters for the Ohio and Erie Canal Corridor Coalition.



*Historic Towpath Trail Emerges Downtown*



*METRO'S New "Green" Intermodal Transit Center*

- The construction of a new central transit transfer station for METRO was completed on an eight acre site on Broadway in December. The facility began operating January 18.
- Lock 3 attracted 130,000 visitors for summer concerts and special events, and over 70,000 for the Fifth Annual Chriskindl Market and Ice Rink, the first year Lock 3 attendance exceeded 200,000. Ten thousand people participated in the Roadrunner Akron Marathon, and the 13th Annual First Night attracted over 13,000.
- The Knight Center of Digital Excellence opened at Main and Market, and is a national center for creation of broadband technology for the underserved. Akron has begun design and construction of a wireless demonstration area of 11 square miles that will include downtown, the biomedical corridor, and neighborhoods near the central city.
- The City sponsored its sixth Lock 3 Summer Arts Experience for 61 high school students who have demonstrated a proficiency in the arts, and who have created more than a dozen public works of art throughout downtown. Over 4,000 people enjoyed the Northside Arts District Art Walks on the first Saturday of every month, and over 2,000 people attended the 3rd Annual Grace Park Art Fair.
- Equity Development Corporation began construction of a 450-bed student apartment complex including street level retail units on a two acre site between High and Main, Exchange and Cedar, an investment of approximately \$25 million. The first apartments will be ready for occupancy in fall 2009.
- The Mayor and the Economic Development staff continue to work with groups that have submitted proposals to construct a new hotel in Downtown, with possible groundbreaking occurring in 2009.
- The expansion of parking at the Akron Centre building to serve First Energy's growth was completed. The Dart Avenue deck adds over 300 spaces.
- Developers continue to work at Lock 4, between the Landmark Building and the Civic Theatre for mixed use redevelopment. It is projected to have 80 market rate apartment units plus retail and food service.
- The Gothic Building is being restored. This historic building on Mill Street will become available in 2009 for office and retail. The Schipper Group completed renovation of the Carlton Building at 201 South Main City approved a \$15,000 facade grant to assist in the project. Classic Pianos, a factory dealer of Yamaha pianos, opened at 121 East Market Street in November. Spinelli's, at 209 S. Main Street opened in the spring with matching lease and improvement grants from the city. The Ohio Brewing Company, the WE Art Gallery, a new U.S. Bank Office on South Main also opened in 2008.

